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Implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) during the period from 21 June to 26 October 2018

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) since my report of 13 July 2018 (S/2018/703), including of the specific provisions of resolutions 2373 (2017) and 2433 (2018). During the reporting period, the situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally calm. The Lebanese Armed Forces continued to consolidate security along the border with the Syrian Arab Republic as part of extending the control of the Government over all Lebanese territory. Nevertheless, the reaffirmed commitment by both parties to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) notwithstanding, there remain outstanding obligations for both parties under the resolution and there was no progress towards a permanent ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel.

II. Implementation of resolution 1701 (2006)

A. Situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

2. The UNIFIL area of operations and the area along the Blue Line remained relatively calm, notwithstanding a serious incident on 4 August when a UNIFIL patrol was attacked in Majdal Zun (Sector West) (see para. 16). The UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander and my Acting Special Coordinator for Lebanon maintained permanent liaison with both parties to de-escalate tensions and continued to urge them to use established channels to address concerns and refrain from any action threatening the cessation of hostilities.

3. UNIFIL continued to monitor the construction works by the Israel Defense Forces south of the Blue Line, which led to tensions on several occasions. On 30 July, UNIFIL observed Israel Defense Forces civilian contractors crossing the Blue Line east of Kfar Kila (Sector East) while initiating earth-digging works, in close proximity to one of the Lebanese "reservation" areas, triggering the deployment of both the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces on their respective sides of the Blue Line. The main armament of an Israel Defense Forces tank was pointed north of

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the Blue Line. Following engagement with the parties by the UNIFIL liaison teams, the Israel Defense Forces withdrew from the area and the civilian contractors continued their work south of the Blue Line.

4. In seven additional separate incidents, UNIFIL observed weapons pointed by the Israel Defense Forces towards the north, including once at Lebanese Armed Forces personnel and on six occasions at UNIFIL personnel or positions. In addition, on 14 August, the Israel Defense Forces fired six smoke grenades, of which at least one landed north of the Blue Line in Rumaysh (Sector West), setting fire to an area stretching south and north of the Blue Line. Israel Defense Forces and Lebanese Armed Forces personnel helped to extinguish the fire. UNIFIL, through its liaison branch, de-escalated the situation.

5. From 5 July to 24 October, UNIFIL recorded 319 Blue Line ground violations, 312 of which were committed by civilians crossing south of the Blue Line, including 208 violations mainly by shepherds and farmers predominantly in the Shab'a Farms area, Kfar Kila, and farmers cultivating their fields, mainly near Rumaysh, as well as 77 violations in connection with the Shu'ayb well near Blida (Sector East). Members of the Lebanese Armed Forces crossed the Blue Line south-east of Kfar Kila on three separate occasions on 12 September while photographing the Israel Defense Forces works. Members of the Lebanese Armed Forces also crossed the Blue Line in Yarun (Sector West) on 15 October and Kfar Kila on 17 October for unknown reasons. On 25 September, two Lebanese municipal police officers crossed the Blue Line in Kfar Kila in connection with ground levelling works being conducted north of the Blue Line. An excavator belonging to the Israel Defense Forces crossed the Blue Line in Yarun on 3 September while clearing vegetation along the technical fence. On 30 July, UNIFIL observed three hunters firing six rounds while south of the Blue Line, close to Mays al-Jabal (Sector East).

6. Israel continued to violate Lebanese airspace almost daily, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and Lebanese sovereignty. From 5 July to 24 October, UNIFIL recorded 550 air violations, totalling 2,057 overflight hours. Unmanned aerial vehicles accounted for 481 of the violations (87 per cent), with the remaining violations involving fighter jets or unidentified aircraft. UNIFIL protested against all the violations to the Israel Defense Forces and urged their immediate cessation.

7. The occupation of northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line by the Israel Defense Forces continued. While the Government of Lebanon has welcomed the UNIFIL proposal for the facilitation of the withdrawal of the Israel Defense Forces from the occupied area, shared with the parties in 2011, the Government of Israel has yet to respond.

8. The delineation of the maritime boundary between Israel and Lebanon remains disputed. Lebanon maintains that the line of buoys, unilaterally installed by Israel, runs through its territorial waters, and does not recognize it. The United Nations does not recognize the line of buoys.

9. Lebanon also alleged that Israel continued to violate its sovereignty by conducting electronic monitoring, espionage and surveillance through infrastructure deployed south of and along the Blue Line and devices placed on Lebanese territory.

10. Pursuant to resolution 1701 (2006), UNIFIL continued to assist the Lebanese Armed Forces in establishing an area between the Blue Line and the Litani River free of unauthorized armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL. UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces operated a daily average of 67 coordinated activities, including patrols, 16 permanent checkpoints, 5 temporary checkpoints and 10 counter-rocket-launching operations across the area of operations, with the Lebanese Armed Forces spot-checking

vehicles. This level of coordinated activities represents 19 per cent of UNIFIL operational activities, taking into consideration only those activities that could be conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces. UNIFIL has continued to accord priority to certain operational activities conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, including foot patrols along the Blue Line and night patrols. It is aiming to increase the involvement of the Lebanese Armed Forces in civil-military coordination projects by fully utilizing the regional centre for civil-military coordination for south Lebanon, inaugurated in May.

11. UNIFIL maintained its high operational tempo in line with resolution 2373 (2017), as reiterated in paragraph 20 of resolution 2433 (2018). From July to October, it conducted an average of 14,346 monthly military operational activities, including an average of 6,782 patrols. Almost weekly, UNIFIL vehicle, foot and air patrols maintained an operational footprint in all municipalities and villages in the area of operations. Areas in which the mission had previously experienced a higher number of restrictions of movement or incidents were visited more frequently. Air reconnaissance patrols continued to be concentrated over those areas with limited access for ground patrols, such as private properties, rugged terrain or land contaminated by explosive remnants of war or anti-personnel mines.

12. UNIFIL continued to focus its operational activities on patrols, in particular foot patrols, along the Blue Line. It also continued to conduct a high number of night patrols and enhanced the use of its air assets, increasing its day and night reconnaissance flight hours per month from an average of 36 hours in July–October 2017 and 54 hours in March–June 2018 to 63 hours in July–September 2018. UNIFIL maintains close contact with the Lebanese Armed Forces through monthly meetings and joint operational activities, as well as with local leaders, including to address any sensitivities with local communities.

13. UNIFIL continued to monitor locations in which the Israel Defense Forces alleged the presence of unauthorized weapons and infrastructure in the UNIFIL area of operations but observed no violations of resolution 1701 (2006) at those locations during the reporting period.

14. In the course of its activities, UNIFIL observed 195 instances of individuals carrying hunting weapons, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006), mostly in the areas of Bastrah, Blida, Mays al-Jabal and Sarda (all Sector East) and Yarun. UNIFIL alerted the Lebanese Armed Forces to each incident. It also expressed its concerns to the Lebanese Armed Forces regarding reports of gunfire during a funeral on 11 August in Tyre (Sector West) and the presence of armed individuals during Ashura' commemorations on 20 September.

15. UNIFIL freedom of movement was generally respected. As detailed in annex I to the present report, in some instances municipal police officers, local leaders or members of local communities stopped UNIFIL patrols.

16. One of the most serious incidents involving UNIFIL personnel in recent years occurred on 4 August, when some 20 individuals in civilian clothes stopped a four-vehicle UNIFIL patrol in the village of Majdal Zun, allegedly because the peacekeepers were taking photographs. During the course of the incident, several individuals broke windows of the patrol vehicles with hammers, shot at two of the vehicles as they sought to disengage and poured gasoline on a vehicle, setting it ablaze. A peacekeeper inside suffered minor burns. Some individuals assaulted the peacekeepers, punching and beating the patrol commander with sticks as he attempted to mediate the situation and kicking and dragging another peacekeeper while he was on the ground. None of the peacekeepers sustained injuries that required medical treatment. Individuals also pointed weapons at the UNIFIL personnel, including at close range, snatching their weapons or demanding that they be handed over. The

patrol requested Lebanese Armed Forces support immediately. Weapons, ammunition and equipment were stolen from the patrol, most of which were later returned by the Lebanese Armed Forces.

17. In its press statement of 9 August, the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the attack against UNIFIL and called for a credible investigation to determine the exact circumstances. UNIFIL completed its internal investigation on 25 September. A UNIFIL military police investigation assessing the actions of the United Nations personnel has also completed its interim report. UNIFIL has urged the Lebanese Armed Forces to complete their investigation. The Head of Mission and Force Commander stressed to interlocutors from the Government of Lebanon that a full investigation must be conducted and the perpetrators held accountable, a message reiterated at Headquarters. UNIFIL resumed its regular patrolling in Majdal Zun, in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, on 25 September. A second patrol was conducted on 8 October. Both were completed without incident. UNIFIL will continue regular patrols in the location.

18. In addition to the above-mentioned incident, individuals in civilian clothes occasionally attempted to seize UNIFIL property. On 7 July, individuals who were being stopped by Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL in Kfar Kila attempted to seize a notebook from a UNIFIL patrol. On 13 July in Ayta al-Sha'b (Sector West), several individuals blocked the path of a patrol and attempted to steal a radio. On 6 September, an individual in Shab'a (Sector East) took a memory card from a UNIFIL camera. It was later returned by the Lebanese Armed Forces.

19. UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon continued their patrols to areas surrounding the sites of the Lebanese non-governmental organization Green without Borders, located close to the Blue Line, conducting an average of 200 vehicle patrols, 20 foot patrols and 10 air reconnaissance patrols per month. Following several incidents in May in which the patrols were stopped by Green without Borders personnel, UNIFIL inspected four sites, Marwahin, Ayta al-Sha'b, Labbunah (all Sector West) and Udaysah (Sector East), on 21 July, and three additional sites, one in Labbunah and two in Aytarun (both Sector West), on 27 September. Given that all the sites were located on private property, the inspections were carried out in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces. No violations of resolution 1701 (2006) were observed.

20. Notwithstanding the aforementioned incidents, the relationship between the local population and UNIFIL remained largely positive. UNIFIL continued to implement quick-impact projects to support the extension of State authority in the south and contribute to force acceptance.

21. As described in annexes to my previous reports, UNIFIL has implemented all recommendations of the strategic review of UNIFIL in 2017 that could be implemented and continues to adhere to the priorities identified during the review (see S/2017/202).

22. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and UNIFIL continued to engage with the Lebanese authorities to ensure appropriate follow-up to the ministerial-level meeting known as the Rome II conference, held in March 2018, including the commitment of Lebanon to increasing the strength and presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces in the UNIFIL area of operations through the deployment of the model regiment and to build the capacity of the Navy. In July, the Government identified a building in Bayt Lif (Sector West) to be used as the model regiment headquarters. The Government, in close coordination with UNIFIL and my Acting Special Coordinator for Lebanon, is discussing implementation modalities with potential donors.

23. In support of Lebanese efforts to build the capacity of and in close coordination with the Lebanese Navy, the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force carried out maritime interdiction operations throughout the maritime area of operations, hailing an average of 25 vessels per day. Of the 2,890 vessels hailed during the reporting period, 745 were inspected and cleared by the Lebanese authorities.

24. The Lebanese Navy maintains a maritime picture of its territorial waters through its eight coastal radar stations. On 12 October, it obtained certification for a second seaworthy vessel that could remain at sea for up to 48 hours. However, both vessels for which crews are certified are undergoing maintenance. The Navy continues to lack the capacity to operate beyond 12 nautical miles from the coast, owing to an absence of appropriate vessels.

25. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force continued to support efforts to build the capacity of the Lebanese Navy by conducting 389 training sessions aimed at improving the common operational standards for monitoring and hailing activities. The Government is reviewing options for increasing its naval capabilities, including deploying dedicated naval personnel, conducting training and obtaining additional assets. UNIFIL is working with the Lebanese Armed Forces to discuss steps towards the development of a comprehensive and practical plan for the enhancement of the Navy. As requested in paragraph 7 of resolution 2433 (2018), I will provide an assessment with recommendations in that regard as part of my next regular report.

B. Security and liaison arrangements

26. UNIFIL hosted two tripartite meetings, on 6 September and 18 October, during which liaison, coordination and violations of resolution 1701 (2006) were discussed. The Head of Mission and Force Commander also continued to liaise with the parties bilaterally to facilitate mutually acceptable solutions to contentious areas along the Blue Line, emphasizing confidence-building measures, such as the visible marking of the Blue Line. UNIFIL personnel held frequent bilateral exchanges with both the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces, including on tactical arrangements aimed at reducing tensions relating to recurring violations or particular incidents close to the Blue Line.

27. The establishment of a UNIFIL liaison office in Tel Aviv, Israel, continues to be raised with the Israeli authorities. Their agreement to the UNIFIL proposal in 2008 notwithstanding, the establishment of the office has remained pending.

28. UNIFIL continued to liaise with the Government of Lebanon, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies assisting in building the capacity of national institutions to protect civilians. UNIFIL also continued to train its personnel to ensure preparedness to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. In August, it facilitated a three-week workshop in Marjayoun (Sector East) for members of the Internal Security Forces aimed at building national capacity for protection, which included training on gender sensitivity, human rights and first aid. Since 2015, 390 individuals have participated in the training. Leadership training was also provided to Lebanese civil defence centres and firefighting squads in the UNIFIL area of operations.

29. UNIFIL continued to train military and civilian personnel on gender mainstreaming and preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. In accordance with the United Nations system-wide strategy on gender parity, the mission adopted in March a gender parity strategy for civilian staff in the mission. A priority for UNIFIL is addressing the gender imbalance among senior staff and in the contingents serving in the Force. The Head of Mission and Force Commander has underlined in his meetings with ambassadors and visiting military officials of troop-

contributing countries the importance of increasing the number of women serving in the Force.

C. Disarming armed groups

30. No progress was achieved with regard to the disarmament of armed groups. Hizbullah continued to acknowledge publicly that it maintained a military capacity. On 14 August, its Secretary-General, Hassan Nasrallah, claimed that "Hizbullah might not be the strongest army in the Middle East, but it is certainly stronger than the Israeli army" and that "the Lebanese resistance — with its arms, personnel, expertise and capabilities — is stronger than ever". On 20 September, in addressing Israel, he said that, "no matter what you do to cut the route, the matter is over, and the resistance possesses precision and non-precision rockets and weapons capabilities". He added that, "if Israel imposes a war on Lebanon, Israel will face a fate and a reality it has never expected on any day". In direct response, the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, warned that, "if [Nasrallah] confronts us, he will receive a lethal blow that he can't even imagine". The maintenance of arms outside the control of the State by Hizbullah and other groups continues to restrict the ability of the Government of Lebanon to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory.

31. In remarks delivered during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, on 27 September, Mr. Netanyahu stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran was "directing Hizbullah to build secret sites to convert inaccurate projectiles into precision-guided missiles" and accused Hizbullah of "deliberately using the innocent people of Beirut as human shields". In exercising its right of reply in the Assembly, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran denounced the information presented by Mr. Netanyahu. On 30 September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lebanon, Gebran Bassil, rejected the allegations and convened members of the diplomatic community on 1 October to a tour of the said sites, while acknowledging that Hizbullah had made "many statements ... affirming [its] possession of precision missiles". In reaction, however, Mr. Netanyahu asserted that the members of the diplomatic community were not brought to the actual underground production facility.

32. Hizbullah denied reports in the media on 19 August that it maintained detention and interrogation facilities, including in the southern suburbs of Beirut and the Biqa'.

33. From 1 June to 20 September, 39 terrorism-related arrests by the Lebanese Armed Forces and security services were reported, including of suspected affiliates of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Jabhat Fath al-Sham (formerly the Nusrah Front). On 1 August, eight Lebanese nationals suspected of having previously fought with ISIL in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq were referred to the judiciary on terrorism-related charges. On 25 June, two Lebanese fugitives were arrested by the Lebanese Armed Forces in Baalbek, reportedly for instigating armed clashes. On 26 June, an Internal Security Forces agent was shot at in Yammunah, Biqa'. On 4 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces deployed in Baalbek following an exchange of fire between unidentified armed persons.

34. The security situation in the Palestine refugee camps was marked by several localized incidents. On 23 July, several persons were injured in the Burj Shamali camp in a personal dispute that escalated into shooting. Between 23 and 27 July, the Joint Palestinian Security Force apprehended several suspects following grenade attacks in the Rashidieh camp near Tyre. An individual apprehended by the group Ansar Allah in the Mieh camp near Sidon on suspicion of the attempted assassination of the group's leader, Jamal Sleiman, was later found hanged in the group's headquarters on 22 July. On 14 September, the Internal Security Forces apprehended an individual,

allegedly affiliated with Ansar Allah, in Sidon in connection with the attempted assassination of a Palestine Embassy official in 2017. On 15 October, clashes between Fatah and Ansar Allah reportedly left 2 persons dead and more than 20 injured. Further clashes on 25 October left a fighter dead and several others wounded, including two members of the Lebanese Armed Forces. A ceasefire that went into effect on 28 October involves the deployment of unarmed members of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to monitor the agreement. The fighting resulted in the forced displacement of most residents from the camp, extensive damage and the suspension of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) operations.

35. In the Ein El Helweh camp near Sidon, the security situation escalated on 15 September when a person was shot dead by the son of a senior figure in the Bilal Badr extremist group. UNRWA schools were closed for a day. The Joint Palestinian Security Force in Ein El Helweh, the work of which was put on hold in July amid tensions between the Fatah and Hamas factions, was reactivated early in October. General tensions between Fatah and Hamas led the Amal Movement to broker a reconciliation on 2 August.

36. There was no progress in dismantling the military bases maintained by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada, which continue to compromise Lebanese sovereignty and impede the ability of the State to monitor and effectively control parts of the border.

D. Arms embargo and border control

37. Allegations of arms transfers to non-State armed actors continued to be made and are of serious concern. While taking such allegations seriously, the United Nations is not in a position to substantiate them independently. Were the allegations to be proved correct, they would constitute a violation of resolution 1701 (2006). More information is provided in annex II to the present report.

38. Reports of engagement by Hizbullah in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic continued. As noted in my report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2018/920), on 19 September, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah reiterated that "we agree that the Government should dissociate itself, but political forces are not dissociating themselves", adding that "our presence there depends on the acceptance and need of the Syrian Government ... what is happening in the region determines the fate of the region and Lebanon". On 23 September, the President of Lebanon, Michel Aoun, reportedly stated that Hizbullah was "defending the lands" through its activities in the Syrian Arab Republic. A number of Lebanese nationals also allegedly continued to fight with anti-government armed groups in the Syrian Arab Republic.

39. As noted in that same report, in a letter dated 24 August addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/595), the Permanent Representative of Yemen referenced a reported meeting of the Secretary-General of Hizbullah with a delegation of Yemeni Houthis on 19 August. In the letter, he raised concern regarding Hizbullah's "transfer of advisers and military instructors to the Houthi coup" as posing a "serious regional and global threat" and asked the Council, through the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), to "investigate, within its mandate, [Hizbullah's] activities that pose a serious threat to Yemen and to take appropriate measures".

40. On 25 September, the parliament of Lebanon passed a law authorizing the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty. The Treaty is focused on enhancing the responsibility of Governments to prevent the illegal transfer and circulation of

weapons outside State control. Lebanon will be obligated to report annually on the implementation of the Treaty.

41. In the context of large-scale counter-terrorism and anti-trafficking operations, the Lebanese Armed Forces reinforced their positions along the border with the Syrian Arab Republic, deploying land border regiments and constructing watchtowers. On 14 August, the Lebanese Armed Forces Commander, General Joseph Aoun, chaired a meeting of the joint committee responsible for the United States of America and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Border Protection Assistance Programme at the Rayak Air Base Central Training Centre in the Biqa' to assess security along the eastern and northern borders of Lebanon.

42. Cross-border fire from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon further declined. Nevertheless, Lebanese Armed Forces data show that 1,006 Syrian nationals were apprehended during the reporting period for entering Lebanon illegally. The Lebanese authorities arrested 16 individuals in connection with human smuggling. In separate Lebanese Armed Forces operations, on 22 June, on the outskirts of Masna', an alleged smuggler was killed and another injured; on 27 September, on the outskirts of Suwayri, a Syrian national died and four others were injured; and, on 7 October, two persons were injured in Suwayri.

43. As part of efforts to tackle illicit cross-border trafficking networks in the Baalbek-Hirmil region, north Biqa', the Government of Lebanon bolstered security for the region, in line with its plan endorsed by the Higher Defence Council on 19 June. On 23 July, a prominent local drug dealer and eight affiliates were killed during a Lebanese Armed Forces raid in Baalbek, with 41 persons arrested. On 25 September, a Lebanese soldier was killed and six others were injured in a raid in Hirmil, while a fugitive was arrested. Subsequently, on 1 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces reportedly arrested 10 fugitives and confiscated weapons, ammunition and narcotics. The Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces conducted counter-terrorism operations in informal Syrian settlements, resulting in several arrests in and around Arsal and Akkar.

E. Landmines and cluster bombs

44. The Lebanese Armed Forces continued mine clearance operations along the Blue Line and in areas south of the Litani River. During the reporting period, there were two victims of items of unexploded ordnance reported north of the Litani and one victim south of the Litani: a remnant of war in the form of a cluster bomb exploded near Hula (Sector East) on 23 September, seriously injuring a local resident. UNIFIL also observed bushfires exacerbated by the presence of mines in Yarun (Sector West), Blida, Mays al-Jabal and Hula (all Sector East), which triggered several uncontrolled explosions. On 16 July, the Lebanese Mine Action Centre initiated a non-technical survey along 120 million m2 of the north-eastern border to determine areas for clearance, with support from the Mines Advisory Group and Norwegian People's Aid. Several donors committed funds for clearance activities in line with the survey results.

45. Lebanon featured as an exemplary model for progress at the eighth meeting of States parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in Geneva from 3 to 5 September 2018. Of the 50 billion Lebanese pounds ($33 million) pledged by the Government over the coming five years for cluster munitions clearance, 7.5 billion Lebanese pounds ($5 million) was allocated in the budget for 2018.

46. Six UNIFIL mine clearance teams and two explosive ordnance disposal teams cleared 11,439 m^2 of land and destroyed 347 anti-personnel mines, including an item of unexploded ordnance near a UNIFIL helipad in the Force's area of operations. Two

mortar grenades found at a UNIFIL position were stored pending their safe destruction.

47. The Mine Action Service of the United Nations conducted 58 quality assurance monitoring visits to the mission's demining teams to ensure safety and effectiveness in UNIFIL demining operations and delivered 13 safety and awareness briefings on landmines/explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, benefiting 292 United Nations military and civilian personnel.

F. Delineation of borders

48. No progress was made towards the delineation or demarcation of the border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic and Israel have yet to respond to the provisional definition of the Shab'a Farms area proposed in my report of 30 October 2007 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2007/641).

49. The dispute between Lebanon and Israel over their exclusive economic zones remained unresolved. In a statement on 1 August, the President of Lebanon stated that "Israel's attempts will not prevent us from ... taking advantage of our oil wealth, as we will soon embark on the exploration phase". Exploration activities by the consortium of three international oil companies that were awarded licences by Lebanon in December 2017 proceeded.

G. Political and institutional stability

50. Since his nomination on 24 May, the Prime Minister-designate, Saad Hariri, has continued to lead consultations with all political stakeholders to form the new Government. On 3 September, he presented a proposal for the new Cabinet to the President. In a statement, the President said that he would continue his consultations with the Prime Minister-designate.

51. Pending the formation of the new Government, the Speaker, Nabih Berri, called for joint meetings of parliamentary committees on key legislation and, following consultations with the Prime Minister-designate, convened the parliament on 24 and 25 September. It, among other things, passed 16 laws, including 1 pertaining to the Arms Trade Treaty and others connected with the international conference in support of Lebanese development and reforms agenda on waste management, judicial mediation, oil and gas transparency, electronic transactions and personal data, and the whistle-blower protection law. Discussions are continuing on the establishment of a follow-up mechanism to the conference pursuant to the outcome communiqué of 6 April.

52. Subsequent to the parliamentary elections held on 6 May, the established electoral dispute resolution mechanism, the Constitutional Council, received 17 challenges, which are pending a decision. Meanwhile, on 17 July, the European Union election observation mission presented its final report, with recommendations on addressing gaps in regulations governing the financing of campaigns, unequal access to the media, the underrepresentation of women in the parliament and the capacity of the electoral supervisory committee. The mission highlighted improvements, including the new proportional system, out-of-country voting and increased voter secrecy.

53. Following the Rome II conference, several countries announced new financial contributions or credit lines to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces in line with their strategic plans. Nevertheless, the implementation of

those new commitments has slowed in the absence of a government to forge bilateral agreements and oversee the coordination of multilateral assistance. Existing bilateral support programmes continued and, on 26 June in Washington, D.C., the Lebanese Armed Forces Commander participated in the first meeting of the joint United States-Lebanese military cooperation body since 2008.

54. The national human rights institution is not yet operational, with no funding allocated by the parliament, and its members, appointed on 21 May, not sworn in by the President. Meanwhile, concerns regarding freedom of expression in Lebanon have grown. On 16 August, the head of the Lebanese Centre for Human Rights was summoned for questioning by the Cybercrime Bureau of the Internal Security Forces over a social media post. On 17 August, a consortium of non-governmental organizations wrote to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression to call for the condemnation of the continued summoning of activists by Lebanon. Subsequently, the Office of the High Commissioner wrote to the Director General of the Internal Security Forces, the Minister of Justice and the Prosecutor General to outline its concerns about restrictions on freedom of expression and practices that have reportedly accompanied the arrest of some activists and bloggers.

55. Between 11 and 21 September, closing arguments in *Prosecutor v. Ayyash et al.* were presented at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. After attending the opening of the final hearings on 11 September, the Prime Minister-designate, stressing the stability and security of Lebanon, pledged to deal with the verdict of the trial "as a responsible official who has the responsibility to protect the country and the Lebanese people".

56. As at 30 September, 971,667 refugees and asylum seekers had been registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, comprising 952,562 Syrian refugees and 19,105 refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities. New registrations of Syrian refugees by UNHCR have been suspended by the Government since 2015. A decrease in the number of registered Syrian refugees was due mainly to natural deaths, onward movements, resettlement and spontaneous returns to the Syrian Arab Republic.

57. Individual spontaneous returns of Syrian refugees have continued, with 3,430 individuals returning between January and September 2018. Another 3,600 individuals returned during the same period in group movements, facilitated by the Lebanese General Directorate of General Security in coordination with the Syrian authorities. While UNHCR was not involved in organizing those returns, it coordinated with the General Directorate and was present at each departure point. UNHCR provided support to returning refugees in obtaining their civil documentation and education certificates and other issues critical for their re-establishment in the Syrian Arab Republic.

58. On 26 July in Beirut, a high-level Russian diplomatic and military delegation met Lebanese officials, including the President, the Prime Minister-designate and the Speaker, to discuss a Russian initiative regarding the return of Syrian refugees. The formation of a Lebanese-Russian coordination committee was then announced in September.

59. It is indicated in the forthcoming vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon for 2018 that 68 per cent of refugees live below the national poverty line of $3.84 per day and 51 per cent below the extreme poverty line. Only 27 per cent of Syrian refugees have legal residency, despite the adoption of circulars in 2017 to waive fees and ease the process, in line with the Lebanon partnership paper of the Brussels II conference, held in April.

60. As at 30 June, the humanitarian resources available for Lebanon in 2018 amounted to $1.26 billion, including $596 million disbursed by donors and $267 million committed for 2018, in addition to funds carried over from 2017. Reported figures continue to show a lack of visibility regarding funding available beyond 2018, with only $250 million reported as commitments for Lebanon, restricting partners' ability to plan for more sustainable solutions to critical humanitarian and stabilization needs.

61. The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan was 34 per cent funded as at 30 June, at $918 million, including $327 million carried over from 2017. The continued high-level donor support to Lebanon notwithstanding, the shortfall in funding resulted in immediate gaps in the health, water and sanitation, shelter and winter assistance programme areas for refugees and host communities.

62. Uncertainty over the financial situation of UNRWA and the Agency's ability to continue to provide essential services, such as health care and education, led to peaceful sit-ins, protests and demonstrations. UNRWA schools in Lebanon opened on 1 September, enabling some 37,000 pupils at 65 schools to continue their studies. On the margins of the opening week of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, I participated in a ministerial meeting, co-chaired by Germany, Japan, Jordan, Sweden, Turkey and the European Union, on 27 September, to underline the importance of UNRWA for the well-being of Palestine refugees and stability in the region. The meeting raised an additional $122 million in new pledges for the Agency.

63. Lebanon presented its first voluntary national review at the ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development on 18 July. Its report provided an overview of progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In his presentation, the Deputy Prime Minister, Ghassan Hasbani, highlighted the challenges facing Lebanon, namely the lack of data, the need to increase the institutional capacity of the public sector and the need for a development agenda.

III. Security and safety of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

64. UNIFIL continually reviewed its security plans and risk mitigation measures, in particular following security threat warnings, and closely coordinated them with the Lebanese authorities. Security exercises were conducted to test the readiness of civilian and military personnel in the event of evacuation during a crisis. In the Arqub area (Sector East), strict security measures have remained in place, including the use of armed escorts, for official movements by United Nations personnel.

65. UNIFIL continued to monitor ongoing proceedings in Lebanese military courts against individuals suspected of planning or perpetrating serious attacks against the Force. The Permanent Military Court held hearings on 10 April regarding the attack against UNIFIL peacekeepers serving with the Spanish contingent in 2007 and in the case of terror intent opened in January 2014. The next hearings for both cases are scheduled for 17 December. In the case of the attempted serious attack against UNIFIL in 2008, in which one of the four convicted perpetrators filed an appeal, the next hearing is scheduled for 6 November. Three investigations launched into the serious attacks perpetrated against UNIFIL on 27 May, 26 July and 9 December 2011 are continuing, pursuant to additional judicial instructions issued by the investigating judge. In the case of the homicides committed in 1980, when two UNIFIL peacekeepers from Ireland were shot dead and one was injured, the Permanent Military Court reopened the trial proceedings and held a hearing on 22 October 2018. The next hearing is scheduled for 14 December. UNIFIL also followed up with the Lebanese Armed Forces on the incident of 4 August in Majdal Zun (see para. 16).

IV. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

66. As at 24 October, UNIFIL comprised 10,519 military personnel, including 530 women (5 per cent), from 41 troop-contributing countries; 233 international staff, including 76 women (33 per cent); and 580 national civilian staff, including 155 women (27 per cent). The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force comprised six vessels, two helicopters and 773 of the Force's total military personnel, including 30 women (4 per cent). In addition, 55 military observers, including 7 women (13 per cent), from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization serve with Observer Group Lebanon, under the operational control of UNIFIL.

V. Conduct and discipline

67. During the reporting period, neither UNIFIL nor the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon received allegations of sexual exploitation or abuse. They continued to implement and enhance measures to prevent sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. UNIFIL conducted seven assessment visits to sectors in its area of operations to assess changes in the risk environment and brief military commanders on their accountability in respect of conduct and discipline matters. The United Nations country team's prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse network in Lebanon continued to inform local communities of expected standards of conduct for United Nations personnel and how to report misconduct. UNIFIL and the Office continued to promote a productive, harmonious and inclusive working environment, with emphasis on protection against sexual harassment and other forms of prohibited conduct.

VI. Observations

68. In support of the country's stability, I call upon the political leaders and all political parties in Lebanon to accelerate their efforts to form an inclusive government. The momentum towards renewed institutional governance set in motion by the parliamentary elections must be sustained for Lebanon to benefit fully from the road map of international support laid out at the conferences held in Rome, Paris and Brussels. It is time to set aside differences, intensify dialogue and put the national interest above partisan politics. A spirit of compromise is required to find common ground, avert the risk of renewed institutional paralysis and swiftly form a government that preserves the balance enshrined in the Taif Accords of 1989 and the Constitution.

69. I also call upon the future authorities to pursue the Lebanese policy of disassociation, consistent with the Baabda Declaration of 2012), and for all Lebanese parties and nationals to cease their involvement in the Syrian conflict and other conflicts in the region. The alleged movement of fighters and war materiel across the Lebanese-Syrian border violates resolution 1701 (2006).

70. The repeatedly self-acknowledged maintenance of unauthorized weapons outside State control by Hizbullah and other non-State armed groups, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006), is deeply troubling and poses a dangerous threat to the stability of Lebanon and the region. Allegations of illegal arms transfers to non-State armed groups in Lebanon also continue to be made, warranting serious concern. The United Nations is not in a position to verify these reports independently. Nevertheless, if they are substantiated, the transfers would constitute a violation of resolution 1701 (2006). The Lebanese steps towards enhanced regulation of international arms

transfers and trade are welcome. In that connection, I call upon Member States to uphold their obligations under resolution 1701 (2006) to prevent the sale or supply of arms or related materiel to entities or individuals in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government.

71. Furthermore, I call upon the Government to take all action necessary to ensure the full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), which require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon so that there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State, in line with the Cabinet decision of 27 July 2006 and earlier decisions of the national dialogue.

72. Continued commitment by all sides to resolution 1701 (2006) remains essential for the stability of Lebanon and the region. The prevailing lack of fulfilment of the resolution by Israel and Lebanon and their continued violations are concerning. Non-compliance increases the risk of tensions and possible escalation into hostilities. I urge both parties to redouble their efforts towards full adherence to the resolution, to consolidate the period of calm of the past years and move decisively towards a permanent ceasefire, as enshrined in the resolution. The United Nations remains ready to support the parties in that regard. The Organization will continue to support efforts to defuse tensions through dialogue, to pursue opportunities for confidence-building and to create an environment conducive to resolving underlying grievances, including through the continued good offices of my Acting Special Coordinator and UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander.

73. I strongly condemn the attack of 4 August on United Nations peacekeepers in Majdal Zun and call upon the Lebanese Armed Forces to complete the investigation and upon the Government to ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable. There was clear intent by some individuals involved to harm the peacekeepers. It is fortunate that the incidents did not result in major injuries. The freedom of movement of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations, including along the full length of the Blue Line, is critical. The Lebanese authorities must fulfil their responsibility to ensure the safety and unimpeded freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel.

74. The continued relative calm that has prevailed along the Blue Line since 2006 is a welcome development. Citizens of both Lebanon and Israel have enjoyed its dividends. It must not be taken for granted, however. In the absence of a permanent ceasefire, incidents continue to have the potential to escalate swiftly. All stakeholders must take responsibility and refrain from language and unilateral action that could increase mistrust and cause the situation to escalate. The constructive engagement of the parties in the tripartite forum, including on efforts to address disputes relating to specific areas along the Blue Line, is commendable. I remain concerned, however, that the absence of an agreement on disputed areas could lead to increased tensions in the light of the continuing Israel Defense Forces works south of the Blue Line. I reiterate my call upon both parties to continue to avail themselves of the UNIFIL liaison and coordination arrangements to the fullest extent possible, and to make further efforts to identify a way forward to resolve existing points of contention.

75. Israeli overflights of Lebanese territory are a near daily occurrence and reported to span almost the entirety of the country. This constitutes a violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and of Lebanese sovereignty. The Israel Defense Forces also continue to occupy northern Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line in a long-standing violation of the resolution. I reiterate my condemnation of all violations of Lebanese sovereignty and my call for Israel to cease its violations of Lebanese airspace and to withdraw its forces from northern Ghajar and the adjacent area north of the Blue Line.

76. The dispute over the maritime exclusive economic zones of Lebanon and Israel remains a flashpoint for tension and mistrust. I encourage the parties to explore

avenues to reduce tensions, which will create conditions conducive to dialogue and for an eventual solution. The United Nations stands ready to support the parties in such efforts.

77. Strengthening Lebanese State institutions remains central to ensuring stability. The United Nations will continue to support Lebanon in that regard, in particular to build the capacity of its security institutions as the sole defenders of the country's sovereignty. In follow-up to the Rome II conference, I encourage Member States to continue to implement existing commitments of support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and security institutions, drawing on their respective strategic plans, including in the context of the strategic dialogue mechanism.

78. The progress achieved in the preparations for a model regiment is welcome. I call upon the Government to step up its efforts to make the regiment operational, with continued support from UNIFIL and the international commu..ity. Furthermore, I urge the Government to prioritize efforts to increase the capability of the Navy. UNIFIL and my Acting Special Coordinator will continue to support its efforts in that regard.

79. Moving forward with the President's commitment to convening a national dialogue towards a national defence strategy is key to strengthening the ability of Lebanon to exercise effective State authority. Such a process should be Lebanese-owned and Lebanese-led, inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable, and in line with the country's international obligations. Earlier decisions of the national dialogue pertaining to the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of the military bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command and Fatah al-Intifada should be implemented.

80. The active engagement of the parliament under the leadership of its Speaker to advance the legislative agenda, including in connection with the commitments forged at the international conference in support of Lebanese development and reforms, held in April, is welcome. Amid the economic challenges facing the country, the reform agenda agreed upon at that conference has never been more relevant.

81. Women remain underrepresented in Lebanese political life. I reiterate my call for political actors to adopt measures to increase the meaningful participation and representation of women at all decision-making levels, also as part of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

82. I appeal to the President to swear in the members of the national human rights institution so that it, including its related mechanism aimed at preventing torture, becomes operational, and call upon the parliament to ensure that the institution has adequate resources to function effectively and independently.

83. Lebanon continues to exercise generosity and hospitality in temporarily hosting Syrian refugees. The United Nations will seek to strengthen the spirit of partnership with all actors, in line with international standards, including the principle of non-refoulement, to ensure the protection and dignity of the refugees while in Lebanon, as well as their ability to take individual free and informed decisions regarding their voluntary return.

84. All Palestinian factions must refrain from actions that endanger communities in Lebanon. Noting the continued serious financial challenges faced by UNRWA, I express gratitude to those Member States and regional organizations that made new pledges or increased their existing support at the ministerial meeting on 27 September.

85. As the proceedings of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon move towards a verdict, I applaud the commitment of the Prime Minister-designate on 11 September to dealing with the verdict responsibly. I look forward to the continued cooperation of the

Government with the Special Tribunal and call upon all parties concerned to respect the judicial process.

86. Noting the request of the Security Council in paragraph 12 of its resolution 2433 (2018) with regard to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, I will respond with my recommendations to the Council by 31 December.

87. The United Nations remains grateful to all countries contributing military personnel and equipment to UNIFIL and Observer Group Lebanon. I commend the Acting Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Pernille Dahler Kardel, welcome the arrival of the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNIFIL, Major General Stefano Del Col, and pay tribute to Major-General Michael Beary, who completed his term in August. I encourage troop-contributing countries to increase the number of women among military personnel in UNIFIL. Lastly, I thank the civilian and military personnel of UNIFIL, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the United Nations country team for their continued efforts and dedication.

Annex I

Restrictions on the freedom of movement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon from 5 July to 24 October 2018

1. On 9 July, a man in civilian clothes approached a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) patrol near a mosque in Tiri (Sector West) and gestured to it to leave the area. Following a discussion with the individual, the patrol proceeded using an alternative route. It was briefly followed by the man and two other individuals in civilian clothes on mopeds; the Lebanese Armed Forces were informed. Following the incident, UNIFIL conducted several patrols at the location without incident until 4 September (see para. 14).

2. On 13 July, two individuals in civilian clothes with two vehicles stopped a UNIFIL patrol in Hallusiyat al-Fawqa (Sector West), stating that the patrol could not proceed without the Lebanese Armed Forces. The patrol requested a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol to accompany it. As the Lebanese Armed Forces were unable to deploy support on short notice, the patrol proceeded using an alternative route. On 16 July, UNIFIL raised the incident with the Mayor of Hallusiyat al-Fawqa, who stated that that was the second time in 20 days that UNIFIL had patrolled in agricultural areas close to private farms and that, owing to the prevailing mistrust of UNIFIL in the area, it was important for the patrols to be conducted in coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces.

3. On 13 July, four individuals in civilian clothes with motorbikes blocked the path of a UNIFIL patrol in the vicinity of Ayta al-Sha'b (Sector West). They opened the patrol car's door and attempted, unsuccessfully, to take the radio. The intervention of the Lebanese Armed Forces was requested. No damage or injuries were reported.

4. On 14 July, Lebanese soldiers stopped a UNIFIL patrol near a checkpoint north-east of Udaysah (Sector East). The Lebanese Armed Forces later stated that they had stopped the patrol for safety reasons, given that the road ahead was impassable for vehicles.

5. On 24 July, a barrier across the road leading to a Green without Borders site in Aytarun (Sector West) prevented a UNIFIL patrol, conducted in coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, from patrolling the area. The patrol continued on an alternative route to complete its activity.

6. On 26 July, a barrier across the road leading to a Green without Borders site in Aytarun (Sector West) prevented a UNIFIL patrol, conducted in coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces, from patrolling the area. The patrol used an alternative route to complete its activity.

7. On 3 August, a UNIFIL patrol conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces was unable to pass a locked gate south of Aytarun (Sector West). The patrol took an alternative route to complete its activity.

8. As mentioned in the main report, on 4 August, some 20 individuals in civilian clothes stopped a four-vehicle UNIFIL patrol in the village of Majdal Zun (Sector West).

9. On 10 August, a UNIFIL patrol in Blida (Sector West) was stopped by an individual in civilian clothes, who gestured with a pistol, pointed towards the ground throughout, to the patrol not to proceed further. UNIFIL requested the Lebanese Armed Forces to intervene. After 90 minutes, the patrol leader decided to take an alternative route to complete the patrol. The Lebanese Armed Forces later informed UNIFIL that the individual was a municipal police officer and that the patrol had been stopped because it had been about to enter private property.

10. On 22 August, the Lebanese Armed Forces stopped a UNIFIL patrol in Udaysah (Sector East), telling it that the road ahead was blocked and that it could not proceed. The patrol continued its assignment on an alternative route. Later that day, UNIFIL received information from the Lebanese Armed Forces suggesting that the patrol had been stopped because it had been about to enter an area restricted by the Lebanese Armed Forces. UNIFIL has since patrolled the location without incident.

11. On 24 August, a UNIFIL foot patrol conducted in close coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces was stopped by an individual in civilian clothes who shouted at the patrol that he was the Deputy Mayor of Dibbin (Sector East) and that it had to halt its activity to avoid "serious problems". Some 15 minutes later, reinforcements in the form of 20 Lebanese soldiers arrived, whereupon the individual left. The patrol completed its activity without further incident.

12. On 29 August, a civilian vehicle and a motorbike blocked the path of an Observer Group Lebanon patrol in Kfar Kila (Sector East). A group of individuals in civilian clothes subsequently approached the patrol. After a brief discussion, they agreed to allow it to continue its activity. UNIFIL has since patrolled the location without incident.

13. On 29 August, UNIFIL observed an individual in civilian clothes photographing a United Nations position in Balat (Sector East) using his mobile phone. When the patrol approached him, he blocked the road with his car and claimed that he was the Mayor of Balat and that the patrol could not enter Balat without being accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. Shortly thereafter, a second man approached the patrol, whereupon the first left the area. The second man introduced himself as a police officer (albeit without presenting an identification card) and told the patrol to ignore the first individual as he was not the Mayor. The patrol then continued its scheduled activity.

14. On 4 September, a UNIFIL patrol sent to investigate gunshots in the vicinity of Tiri (Sector West) was blocked by a civilian vehicle and a motorbike. One of the individuals blocking the road was verbally abusive towards the patrol. As the Lebanese Armed Forces were unable to deploy support on short notice, the patrol returned to its base without completing its planned activity. Following the incident, UNIFIL conducted several patrols at the location without incident until 10 October (see para. 16).

15. On 15 September, a UNIFIL patrol was stopped by five individuals in civilian clothes in Kunin (Sector West). About 30 locals gathered around the patrol and calmly explained that they did not want UNIFIL to patrol the village during prayer time without being accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces. Shortly thereafter, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrived and escorted the patrol out of the village, whereupon it resumed its activity. The same day, a second patrol was stopped by about 10 locals in the same village on the road leading to the mosque. An off-duty Lebanese soldier in civilian clothes intervened and calmed down the somewhat agitated crowd and assisted the patrol in leaving the village. Shortly thereafter, UNIFIL met the Mayor of Kunin, who gave assurances that patrols were welcome in the area, but that it would be preferable if they used the main road instead of the narrow road next to the mosque. UNIFIL resumed patrols thereafter. The incidents took place during the period of religious commemoration of Ashura'. UNIFIL usually patrols the location without incident.

16. On 10 October, an Observer Group Lebanon patrol vehicle was stopped by two young people in civilian clothes in Tiri (Sector West) who told the patrol that it was not allowed to enter the village unless accompanied by the Lebanese Armed Forces and that it should leave immediately. On 12 and 13 October, UNIFIL followed up with the Mayor of Tiri, who said that he did not know who the youths were but

underlined that he had not authorized anyone to speak on his behalf. In a meeting with the Lebanese Armed Forces South Litani Sector on 15 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces emphasized that local residents had no objection to UNIFIL patrolling the village; however, they had requested UNIFIL to use the main road through the village and to avoid using the narrow streets in the centre owing to the size of the vehicles.

Annex II

Implementation of the arms embargo

1. In paragraph 18 of its resolution 2433 (2018), the Security Council recalled paragraph 15 of its resolution 1701 (2006), according to which all States were to take the measures necessary to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using flag vessels or aircraft, the sale or supply of arms and related materiel to any entity or individual in Lebanon other than those authorized by the Government or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and requested the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council an annex on the implementation of the arms embargo. The Council did not stipulate a United Nations role for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the embargo. UNIFIL, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the Secretariat have limited authority and capacity in that regard. The United Nations, however, remains committed to supporting overall compliance by the parties with resolution 1701 (2006) in all its provisions and advancing its implementation. Going forward, the United Nations will continue to engage with Member States on allegations of weapons transfers and efforts to address those allegations and other violations of the resolution.

2. With regard to control of the land border, in 2007, at the invitation of the Security Council, and in close liaison with the Government, the Secretary-General dispatched an independent border assessment team to assess the monitoring of the border with the Syrian Arab Republic and to report back to the Council. Recommendations from the missions in 2007 and 2008 have been progressively implemented by the Government. An integrated border management strategy for Lebanon, funded by the European Union, was subsequently launched in 2012, finalized in 2014 and sent to the Cabinet for adoption. The strategy's ongoing implementation is aimed at improving the ability of Lebanon to secure its border in accordance with national and international integrated border management standards and increasing the effectiveness of the border management-related security agencies.

3. The Lebanese Armed Forces-led Border Control Committee, a working-level inter-agency body that includes key donors, continues to implement technical cooperation programmes aimed at enhancing Lebanese capacity to control and facilitate the movement of people and goods across the borders. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon supports the Committee in promoting the complementarity and impact of border-related United Nations activities.

4. The lack of delineation in some areas of the border with the Syrian Arab Republic notwithstanding, the authority of the Government of Lebanon has been extended and border control enhanced as the Lebanese Armed Forces reinforced positions along the eastern border. Four land border regiments are deployed along the north-eastern border, with the support of Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Using watchtowers and forward operating bases, the regiments were instrumental in counter-terrorism operations in mid-2017. Regiment troops are being trained at the expanded Rayak Training Centre with the support of the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States.

5. Legislative steps were also taken to prevent illicit weapons transfers, with parliamentary adoption on 25 September of a law authorizing the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty. Lebanon will be obligated to report annually on the implementation of the Treaty, which is focused on the responsibility of Governments in exercising oversight to prevent the illegal transfer and circulation of weapons outside State control. The United Nations stands ready to support the Government in

the implementation of the Treaty, including any steps that it may deem necessary to adjust its legal framework and oversight system.

6. Further government efforts aimed at controlling the unauthorized transfer of arms or related materiel include the arrests of alleged weapons dealers in Arsal, Hirmil and Baalbek on at least four occasions during the reporting period. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida affiliates have been reported as recipients of illegal arms transfers. On 17 July, in Arsal, the Lebanese Armed Forces raided the residence of a Lebanese national over alleged links to a terrorist organization and confiscated weapons, computers, communication devices, surveillance cameras and army equipment found in his possession. Also in Arsal, on 22 July, a Lebanese Armed Forces patrol located five explosive belts. On 14 August, a wanted Lebanese national was arrested and weapons and ammunition were confiscated by the Lebanese Armed Forces in a raid in Buda'i, Baalbek, east Lebanon. On 28 August, in a raid conducted in the Hirmil area, the Lebanese Armed Forces arrested wanted individuals and confiscated weapons and ammunition. On 1 October, the Lebanese Armed Forces conducted large-scale raids using helicopters to locate fugitives on the outskirts of Hirmil. At least 10 fugitives were reportedly arrested, and weapons, ammunition and large quantities of illegal narcotics were seized.

7. Further to section II.D of the main report, some Member States have expressed concern over the alleged use of commercial air transport by foreign countries to illegally transfer weapons into Lebanon. In November 2016, Israel alleged air shipment of weapons from the Islamic Republic of Iran using commercial flights to Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport. The Lebanese authorities denied the allegations. The Islamic Republic of Iran also denied the allegations at the time (see S/2016/992). The United Nations is not in a position to substantiate the allegations. In a letter dated 25 October addressed to the Secretariat, a Member State provided information based on open-source reports that allege that, "since 2006, Iran has provided Hizbullah with surface-to-air missiles, surface-to-surface missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, unmanned aircraft systems, light vehicles, and various small arms" by land and air routes. The Secretariat is not in a position to verify the allegations.

8. The UNIFIL Maritime Task Force assists the Lebanese authorities in securing the country's maritime borders and entry points to help to prevent the unauthorized entry of arms or related materiel by sea into Lebanon, in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution 1701 (2006). It monitors the maritime border and entry points, inter alia by carrying out maritime interdiction operations in support of the Lebanese Navy. Since the inception of the Task Force in October 2006, its vessels have conducted more than 89,500 hailing procedures, leading to some 12,000 inspections by the Navy and Customs Administration. The activities contributed to the detection of a smuggling attempt on 27 April 2012 (see S/2012/502).